

# CATHOLICS SPEAK



for  
SPAIN

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# Introduction

*At about 4 p.m. on the afternoon of April 27, 1937, the Basque holy town of Guernica was bombarded. It was totally destroyed. Who did the bombing?*

"If the oath of a Christian and a Basque Alcalde has any value, I swear before God and history that German airplanes bombed viciously and cruelly our beloved town of Guernica until they had wiped it off the earth."—*Rev. Father Eusebio de Arronategi, priest of the Church of Santa Maria in Guernica.*

"On March 31 last . . . the important town of Durango was bombarded and largely destroyed. Its magnificent parish Church of Santa Maria and a modern Church of the Jesuit Fathers were shattered, with the death of two priests who were celebrating a mass and multitudes of the faithful who were present. The convent of the Augustinian Sisters was also destroyed, . . . thirteen nuns were killed."

—*From a letter to the Pope as reported by G. L. Steer in The New York Times. The letter bore the signatures of Father Ramon Galbarriatu, vicar general of the diocese of Vitoria; Father Pedro Menchaca, canon and chancellor of the diocese; ten parish priests of Bilbao, the coadjutor of the Church of Santa Maria in Durango, the parish priest of Abendiano and the coadjutors of Murelega, Arbacegui, Guerricaitz, Berritur, and Markina.*

*On May 12, 1937, a certain Wandel, Nazi Storm Trooper, the pilot of one of the airplanes which destroyed Durango, was captured. He admitted that German airplanes were bombing the Basque cities.*

"Total war is without pity. . . . It does not only attack men, but also women and children."—*General Erich von Ludendorf, in Total War, Munich, 1935.*

*On April 27, 1937, at about 4 p.m., the People's Court in Berlin sentenced to prison a number of Catholic priests and*

laymen, leaders of a "Peace League of German Catholics." The president of the Court asked the following questions:

PRESIDENT: "What was the aim of your peace society?"

CHAPLAIN KRAMER: "We had set ourselves the aim of making propaganda in Catholic circles for peace."

PRESIDENT: "Did it not occur to you that persistent emphasis on the idea of peace, in the form which you chose would have consequences?"

"When incendiary bombs devastate enemy cities and when the inhabitants are machine-gunned by airplanes, resistance becomes impossible. The demoralized people will demand the cessation of hostilities. . . ."—*Oberst Von Oertzen in Grundzuege der Wehrpolitik, Hamburg, 1935.*

"There is yet another more amazing phenomenon. At the present moment, the German Catholics cry out against the persecutions of Hitler nationalism, and the German bishops ask the support of his Holiness against the Hitler tyranny, which has been determined to dechristianize the German people. Yet, Spanish Catholics, instead of joining their German brothers and helping them in their protest, accept Hitler as their idol, opening Spain to the invasion of the Hitler army, and drawing their social and political programs from those of the Nazis. How can this be understood? Is it possible to stand for Berlin and the catechism of Christian doctrine at the same time? Is it licit to bring to Spain the enemy of Christ so that he may support Catholic doctrine?

"The game is very clear. In the Spanish fascist camp it is not a question of defending religious spirituality. It is a question of politics.

"Let me offer in evidence something I saw in the papers of February 11. In one I saw a pastoral letter from Monsignor Kaller, Catholic bishop of Western Prussia.

" 'They [the Nazis] claim that Christianity is finished, that it has foundered because it no longer meets the needs of the German race; they wish to replace it with a racial religion. This is declaration of war against the Catholic church.' "

"In another journal on the same day I found the latest pastoral



letter of M. Goma, Archbishop of Toledo, who is in the service of the rebels. It says:

“ ‘Everyone has the right to fight anyone who engages in war against God.’

“Do you understand this? The German bishops denounce Hitler for setting himself against God. In spite of this, the Cardinal Primate of Spain ranges himself on the side of Hitler. And as we are against Hitler, he recommends that we be slaughtered in a war of religion. He revives those wars of religion which were a holocaust of humanity and which we thought extinguished forever. More, not only does he declare them legitimate, but he orders them undertaken against the enemies of Hitler, that is to say, against the true friends of God. Could anything be more absurd?”—*Don Angel Ossorio y Gallardo, Spanish Ambassador to France, in a speech on February 22, 1937.*

# The Spanish Church Through the Ages

*Lawrence A. Fernsworth is Barcelona correspondent of the London Times and special correspondent of The New York Times. He is a Catholic and has contributed to America, Jesuit weekly review, and other periodicals. In an articles in the October, 1936, Foreign Affairs, he wrote:*

“Unpleasant as is the tale of the church’s alliance with the republic’s enemies, the facts must be faced; the tale must be told. To do otherwise would be insincere and cowardly.

“Up to the advent of the republic there existed a kind of union of church and state which meant that the clergy and the hierarchy were paid from the public treasury; the bishops were the nominees of the kings, that is to say, were political personages addicted to the regime; certain bishops were members of the Senate; the church had intervention in the national schools for the purpose of teaching religion. In other words, the church was the ally of the state; but the state was regarded by the people as their oppressor. At least, illiterate and hungering masses saw it that way. Moreover, the church constituted a heavy drain upon the economic resources of the country. It was top-heavy with clergy—sixteen to twenty of them could be seen any day at some modest funeral, each one collecting his fee. And how many times have I walked into some cathedral to find a solemn or a pontifical mass being celebrated in all liturgical pomp with the assistance of the entire cathedral chapter and in the presence of only three or four of the faithful!

“The people had their chief contacts with the church for funerals, masses and dispensations. They arrived at the conclusion that the church was a negocio, a business. Some of the clergy lived scandalous lives. Too many of them were accused of attempting to dominate the households with which they had contact, of setting themselves up as bosses in the villages, and of much more. In consequence the clergy came to lose the respect of great scores of the population—if not, indeed, of a majority of Spanish Catholics. Hundreds of thousands were completely



driven away from the church. Others, the anti-clericals, drew a sharp line between clericism and Catholicism. Of such were the many good practising Catholics who favored the republic and who bitterly resented the attempts of the clergy to make them oppose it."

*From Fortune, April, 1937*

"In so far as the Catholic Church in Spain was a great religious institution it received the same veneration it receives among all peoples. The difficulty was that the Catholic Church in Spain was not only a great religious institution. It was also a great economic force and a great political power. Its political power came from its peculiar union with the political government. Prior to 1931 canonical law and civil law existed side by side. Religious indifference was an offense against the fatherland. Clergy and hierarchy were paid by the state and the bishops were nominated by the king. The result was that bishops and priests shared political power with the lay officers. And when political power was oppressive, as it generally was, bishops and priests shared political obloquy.

"As an economic force the church was even more powerful. From the thirteenth century on, the kings had struggled and struggled unsuccessfully against the temporal rivalry of the bishops. After centuries of royal attrition the church, in 1787, still actively ruled some 3,000 Spanish towns and enrolled in its holy orders and its priesthood over 200,000 persons out of a total population of only 10,000,000. Even at the beginning of the last century its landholdings were approximately 14,000,000 acres and its annual income better than a billion *reals* (about \$70,000,000), a considerable wealth in a country as poor as Spain.

"During the nineteenth century the church lost its land, receiving instead an annual subsidy which in 1931 amounted to \$12,000,000. To this must be added its income from fees for masses, fees for baptisms, fees for marriages, fees for burials, gifts, and alms.

"But it was not only the drain by way of taxation and the like which created the problem. There was also the economic competition and political influence of the orders, and particularly of the Jesuits, the great order founded in 1539 by the Basque, Loyola. Both Charles I and Philip II in the sixteenth

century had objected to the Jesuit vow, which placed obedience to the Pope above obedience to the King, and Charles II had eventually expelled the order in 1767. There were also later expulsions; out of the last 175 years the order had been under sentence of suppression or expulsion for eighty-two. This antipathy to the Jesuits, moreover, was not peculiar to the kings. Alfonso XIII referred in 1910 to 'the public aspirations for the reduction and control of the excessive number of religious orders.' The basis for these 'aspirations' was the order's industrial and commercial activity. They ran laundries, clothing factories, flour mills, in competition with private industry, and since they paid no taxes and frequently used unpaid labor of their members and students, the competition was extremely profitable to them and extremely onerous to those who traded against them. It was estimated in the Cortes in 1931 that the Jesuits owned a third of the country's wealth—a guess which testifies to the repute of the order among the people if not to the accuracy of the guesser.

"The church and the orders together therefore constituted an enormously powerful inheritor of the Spanish past. And their power was not only economic and political, it was also spiritual. The population of active Catholics in Spain is surprisingly small: the Catholic paper, *Correo Espanol*, estimated it at 1,500,000 men and 3,500,000 women in the first decade of the century. But the traditions of Spain are Catholic notwithstanding, and the church has exercised a power over the Spanish school system which has made it an integral part of the population. Even though admitting its inability to educate the masses of the people itself, it opposed all lay efforts in that direction, and had, prior to 1931, a virtual monopoly over secondary education, which was principally in the hands of the Jesuits."

# Spanish Catholics Speak

## "This Is Not a Religious War"

*Don Jose Antonio Aguirre is the leader of the Basque Nationalist Catholic Party and President of the autonomous Basque government. He is a practising Catholic and a devout son of the church. It is noteworthy that in the Basque provinces, the clergy are close to the people and more so than in any other section of Spain. They support the republican cause. On December 22, 1936, Aguirre said in a radio broadcast from Bilbao:*

"The struggle now taking place in Spain, the world should know, is not a religious war, but rather a war with an economic content and that is an archaic economic content. . . . It is not a religious war, nor can Christian doctrine be invoked, because Christian doctrine is of love, peace and renunciation in favor of one's fellow beings. Christian doctrine is one and inflexible and cannot be used as a means when convenient or trampled down when inconvenient. Think of the priests murdered by the rebels and of those worthy clergymen exiled to far off lands for the great and terrible crime of loving the country of their birth. The paganism of the writings of the fascist press does not agree with Christian ideals. This is not a religious war."

## "It Is a Republican Government"

*The French Catholic weekly Sept reports an interview with Sr. de Irujo, Basque Catholic minister in the Spanish Cabinet representing the Basque people:*

"What we want to know is if anti-clericalism is part of the program of the Popular Front government? Irujo answered, 'No! If that were the program of the Spanish government, I, a Catholic, would not take part in it, and the Basques would not be with it. Our government has been constituted to resist a military, anti-

democratic and anti-republican rebellion. It is not a government of class warfare. It is a republican government. . . .'

"'Can you tell us, what is the religious situation in the Basque country, Mr. Secretary?'

"'In the part occupied by the government, not a priest has lost his life. All the churches are open. All religions are exercised freely. What few attempts against priests occurred were quickly suppressed.'

"'And what is the position of the priests in the section occupied by the rebels?'

"'Here is a list of some of the priests shot by the rebels in the Basque country. And why? Because they did their duty as priests without choosing politics of either side. Daily the list grows. . . . Francoism, you understand, is fundamentally pagan as is Hitlerism. . . .'

### **"With the People Against Fascism"**

*Jose Maria de Semprun Guerra is a lecturer in the philosophy of law at the University of Madrid. This quotation comes from the French Catholic Review Esprit of November 1, 1936. Mr. George N. Shuster has said of this review (Commonweal, April 2, 1937): "I wish we had either in this country or in England a journal as free from chauvinism in every form as is Esprit."*

"When, hearing of violence against the members of the church and object of religion, people insist on crediting the government or the Popular Front with a policy of deliberate persecution, they forget what is happening in the Basque provinces. I speak from what I saw during this last summer. In the Basque country, where there is incomparable enthusiasm for the struggle against the rebels, where the people and the authorities are unreservedly on the side of the legal republic, the priests and the religious of both sexes enjoy absolute liberty and receive every respect, while the religious services are carried out with all the traditional assiduity and devotion of those provinces.

"In Catalonia and the rest of Spain there is no lack of prominent Catholics who, without accepting responsibility for all the measures and even the excesses of the Popular Front revolutionaries, have not hesitated to stand side by side with the people against fascism."

## "The Obligations of Citizens"

*The London Daily Telegraph on September 22 and 29, 1936, published the following letters from Don Enrique Moreno, a devout Catholic and lecturer in Oxford University. On September 22 he wrote:*

"May I express the painful impression produced on many Spanish Catholics by the words with which the Pope has recently blessed the rebels? We Spanish Catholics who have been scandalized by seeing the greater part of the Spanish clergy joining the initiators of a rebellion against the legitimate government of the nation; we who have witnessed how the soldiers of the republic were fired on from the church towers in Madrid; and, above all, we, who have been foreseeing for many years the disastrous end of a policy of constant identification of the spiritual interests of the church with the economic ones of the rich, cannot but lament that the knowledge of certain facts apparently has not reached the Vatican.

"Even in the event of a rebel victory, what influence on the masses will the priests have whose hands might appear stained with blood? The memories of the peasants murdered by the legionnaires and of the women violated by the Moors would always be an insurmountable barrier between religion and the people.

"I believe sincerely that the silent and persevering work of a minority of Catholics working within the republican regime will redound more to the glory of God and to the benefit of His Church than the immediate and purely political triumph of a clergy condemned to live among the hatred and the animadversion of the majority of the country. And this especially if the highest authorities of the Catholic Church make every effort not to render incompatible the practice of Catholicism with the fulfillment of the obligations which all citizens, Catholics and non-Catholics, are in duty-bound to carry out in support of the legitimately constituted government. In the present case this legitimacy can only be denied through ignorance or malice."

*In his letter of September 29, Moreno wrote in part:*

"... with regard to the military activity of the priests, I will not say anything of what I have seen with my own eyes, but will



limit myself to quoting the words of the correspondent of the Catholic weekly, the *Tablet*, in its issue of September 19:

“‘Priests in short soutanes, rifle on shoulder, were taking their flock to battle.’ Of course, when these priests return to their parishes they will do so with blood-stained hands.

“As to the abuses committed against nuns, I must declare that, having lately worked in the service of the Committee for the Protection of National Artistic Treasures, work which enabled me to visit many nunneries, I do not know in Madrid a single case in which nuns have been outraged by the loyalists.

“I am not a Bolshevik disguised as a Catholic, but a Catholic who is fulfilling his duty of supporting the legitimate government of his country against those who—I do not know if in God’s name—have introduced the Moors into Spain and are trying to turn my country into a kind of German and Italian protectorate. I do not know what American Catholics would do under the same conditions.

“One must also not forget the attitude of the Basque priests, fighting against the rebels in complete unity with the people; nor the adhesion to the government of a minority of Catholics, poets and thinkers, who are trying to save by means of the spirit that which cannot be saved by the sword, namely, the spiritual prestige of Catholicism.”

## **“Fascism Endangers World Peace”**

*Canon Racaful of Cordoba Cathedral is one of the outstanding Catholic thinkers of Spain. He expresses his attitude in the present situation as follows:*

“What would Christ’s attitude have been? Let us suppose for a moment that events in Spain coincided with Jesus Christ’s earthly life: would He have been beside those who, without themselves taking any risk, have unleashed the war, destroying homes and scattering desolation and ruin? Would He have approved the criminal enterprise of deciding by means of violence, outside the law and against it, political disagreements amongst brothers? There are in this war on one side the powerful, the wealthy, all the privileged ones of the world; on the other, the poor, the



humble ones. Can anybody doubt that Jesus—as He did before—would have been with the humble and hungry crowds?

“There is no doubt that the workers, due to the fact of being so, are not saints, and, in these moments, they may give way to reprehensible deeds and useless violences, but this which is constantly used as an argument against the popular cause is for me a very strong reason to patronize it, because if the workers are mistaken, and if, as has been claimed, they have the moral sense darkened, the remedy is not to shoot them down without mercy, but to preach to them, to awake their consciences, instead of killing them savagely as if they were dogs.

“The intentions of the generals who are fighting against the people may be as good as they want, but the truth is that they have started from this undeniable fact: the rebellion against the legal government of Spain. The thing is so clear that they have not even tried to deny it, they only say that the government ruled badly, and it is with its errors that they intend to apologize for their great sin of sedition. Now then, the Catholic doctrine is so formal on this point that it does not give way to any possible doubt. A Catholic may write against his government's errors, prove its faults, vote against it, assist protest meetings and manifestations, do everything allowed by law and suggested by his civil fervor. What he has not the right to do is to recur to sedition against the authority which represents God and to whom, by this fact, he owes submission, honor and reverence even when he is unjustly pursued by said authority. And if this concerns all Catholics, who cannot, without falling into a sin, rise up in arms against the public authority, what is there to say in extenuation for those who by their profession are duty bound to impose by their arms respect and obedience to the legal government?

“The movement which the people are trying to demolish has a name which qualifies it expressively—fascism. Fascism is well known to us by the books of its authorized spokesmen: Rosenberg in Germany and Gentile in Italy. . . . The certain fact is that fascism is inadmissible for Catholics. We can neither admit its brutal negation of the rights of the individual, nor accept the impious subordination of the church to a state monstrously exalted . . . nor accept its exaggerated nationalism which is a perpetual danger to world peace and to human brotherhood. Our faith compels us to oppose this pagan conception.”

## **"Fascism Is Anti-Christian"**

*The Rev. Father Leocadio Lobo is one of the most beloved of the Madrid clergy. He is known as the people's priest and has stood staunchly by the people in their fight against fascism. On September 20, 1936, in a radio broadcast from Madrid, Father Lobo stated:*

"I am a Catholic and a Spaniard. I maintain relations with the Holy See, and with my Bishop, who is now absent from Madrid.

"When you tell me that the people do not believe, that they have turned pagan, that—I have heard with my own ears—they are riffraff, and rabble, and a Marxist mob, I do not curse, for the Gospel restrains my tongue from cursing, but I say they are not a mob, not riffraff, not a rabble.

"They demand social justice, the lessening or the total disappearance of the infinite gulfs between those who have all and those who have nothing? Then they are right and because they are right they must demand and claim and insist and prevent the continuance of this wrong state of affairs.

"The Spanish people cry out that the rebels shall not pass. And they shall not pass, for neither reason nor justice is with them, for they have confounded things that are utterly opposed: Christ and Mahomet, violence and religion, fascism and Spain.

"I ask you to think. Fascism, disguised or not disguised, is essentially anti-Christian."

## **"True Catholic Is With People"**

*Don Jose Bergamin, director of the great Catholic review, Cruz y Raya, has written in the Paris weekly newspaper Vendredi as follows:*

"We, the Catholics, are not only tolerated and accepted by the people sympathetic with the government in Spain, but we are welcomed by them enthusiastically.

"The first time after the rebellion that I spoke at a meeting I was a little nervous as to what my reception, as a Catholic, would be. Immense overflowing enthusiasm stilled all my doubts. The same things always happens. The people see the official

church as the ally and the friend of its oppressors. Religion means money, power, domination, inhumanity, capitalism, fascism. The anti-clericals were, at least until recently, very moderate, rather in the style of Lerroux. They were neither Socialists nor Communists. The youth of Spain . . . had passed beyond the anti-clerical state of mind. And if this hatred of the clericals returned it was self-provoked before the elections. A certain Bishop in Catalonia distinguished himself by his violence against the Popular Front and against democracy, and insisted that Christ was with the Rightists. The union of the official church with the fascists was self-evident. And this state of things was seen still more clearly when churches and convents were fortified and were made deposits for arms. The reaction was cruel. But I am surprised that it was not worse. But now the course of this hatred has been almost run.

"The people still have respect for real religion, for spiritual things and for charity. The true Catholic is on the side of the people. Those who attend only to their religion and who do not mix up in political strife are not molested. It is true that the priests no longer wear their robes, but also among the fascists few priests in cassocks are to be seen. Many priests have refused to sign a declaration of impartiality. They are waiting and hoping for a victory by Franco and for a return of their privileges. They are incorrigible."

### **"We Defend Liberty"**

*On December 19, 1936, the Basque Nationalist Catholic Youth issued a declaration to the democratic Anti-Fascist Youth Associations, at a Congress held in Paris. After stating the Basque position in the Spanish Civil War, the declaration continued:*

"We are fighting because we are *democrats*, and opposed to violence which claims to be a system of government.

"The rebels intended to impose on *Euzkadi* a fascist regime, a regime of violence, totalitarian and autocratic, which ignored the rights of democracy and of the people, and was the very antithesis of our historic tradition. They wanted a deified state, a leader symbolizing that state; a people oppressed and molested by the caprice of its tyrant. We repudiate violence as a system of

government, and consequently all the forms which this system takes in present-day Europe.

"We cannot tolerate that a people should be kept isolated from public functions. We appeal from this Congress, as our companions appeal from their trenches, to the world, that political and social life be founded on a democracy rejecting all dictatorial, imperialist and sectarian tendencies.

"In conformity with these beliefs we raise our voice to be heard by the whole world in protest against crime and assassination, against profanation and sacrilege, against lying and calumny.

"We defend the memory of the innocent victims, of the priests and women criminally assassinated by the military and their allies in the provinces of Alava, of Navarre and Guipuzcoa, without trial and almost always without any declaration by the victims. We protest against the violent deaths of thousands of men who have fallen to the mad onslaught of fascism. The roads and the distant places, the cemeteries and even market squares of Navarre, Guipuzcoa and Alava cry out and protest against such inhuman conduct. There our martyrs sleep in peace.

"We protest also in the name of the innocent victims of the military and their allies in every part of Spain which they hold.

"We protest against those who have shot prisoners and killed the wounded. We protest against the barbarous, savage bombardments of open towns, which have caused the deaths of women, children and sick men in hospital. We protest against the presence of Moors in the rebel ranks, those Moors whose presence is an insult to civilized Europe. We protest against those bombardments which have brought death to thousands of persons who had remained outside the conflict.

"We defend the liberty and respect the right of others, which should rule human society.

"We demand that the war behind the ranks, in the towns and villages and communities, far from the front-line, shall cease. That the lives of the innocent and prisoners be respected. That justice alone punish crime.

"We ask that consciences may be respected. There will be no peace in society so long as the respect of consciences in the matter of religion is not a principle to which all nations adhere.

"We wish that all governments may hear this cry of sincerity and human feeling. Let us all collaborate so that we need not



blush before history for these crimes against the law of nature.

"We, the youth of the Basque people, we wish a new Euzkadi, rooted in its political, social and religious traditions. A democratic Euzkadi, which shall be the realization of our cry and our motto: '*Juan goikoa eta lege zarra*.'"

## **The False Cry of "Communism"**

*Don Angel Ossorio y Gallardo, Ambassador to France, and the most distinguished representative of conservative Catholic opinion, former minister under the monarchy, delivered an impressive speech on "The Future of Spain" in Paris, February 22, 1937. He had the following to say concerning the question of Communism in Spain:*

"They who attack the republic in Spain say they want to free it from Communism. Those who help them from without proclaim as their only aim the 'prevention of Communism' in the West and even reach the point of speaking of the 'thirst for blood of Communism.' Others excuse themselves because they fear Communism more than fascism.

"My personal situation prevents me from speaking of other countries. I will refer exclusively to Spain. Against whom did those Spaniards who pretend to be frightened by Communism rise up on July 18? Against a Communist government? In no way! That government was strictly republican, exclusively bourgeois. Later, it was necessary to call into the government all those parties and trade unions which represented the people united to defend itself. So they who have brought Communists and Anarchists into the government have not been the republic, but the generals and the fascists who rose up in arms.

"No one can believe in the alarm of these people before Communism. Why? When a moderate socialism dominated among the workers, did they accept that socialism? When the republic wished to make a measured, insufficient, capitalist, agrarian reform, did they admit it? When any movement of Christian democracy was initiated in Spain, did they not cover its leaders with improper statements, saying that the Bolsheviks were preferable? When any pope spoke words of courage for the workers, did they not cover him with slurs, calling him heretic and offering prayers to God to bring him to the right road? Was it not

one of the chiefs of the Spanish ultra-Catholic integritism who publicly said that if the popes preached against the abuses of capitalism, he would turn into a Greek schism monger?

"The infamous war which is now destroying Spain is due to nothing else than that the republic would realize a slight advance in the social order. It is a question, finally, of perpetuating a system of castes and preventing the expansion of labor.

"This and not Communism is that which the rebels wish to prevent. We recognize that their fear is unjustified. The obsession of Communism is simply a subterfuge."

## **An Appeal to the World**

*Reprinted from the Manchester Guardian of January 20, 1937.*

"It is difficult at the present time for reason to maintain control over emotion, for such are the horrors of the civil war which is being waged on the soil of our country that even the coolest minds are unable to master their pain, bitterness and indignation. A terrible responsibility rests on those who have launched this fratricidal conflict in defiance of all dictates of conscience and requirements of law.

"We, Christians, of different social standing, perhaps divided by our varying political opinions as well, but united by the spiritual bond of a common faith in the ordinances of God, have decided to raise our voice in all modesty, to protest against all these acts of injustice and cruelty. Each day new crimes are committed, from hour to hour the black clouds of war gather over our heads. Is it possible that in the twentieth century of the Christian era there can be men, calling themselves Catholics, who thus forget their most elementary duty? We do not intend even to express our opinion on the brutality of a civil war in which the most elementary rules regarding the safety of the civil population in time of war are being violated. Influenced solely by principles of Christian ethics, we protest, with the whole strength of our convictions, against an act so detestable as the daily repeated bombardment of our dear Madrid, capital of the Spanish republic.

"The proud city of Oviedo has been rightly given the sad and bloody name of 'Martyr among all cities,' but by what name,



then, can Madrid be called, ravaged as she is by foreign bombs, encircled by a colonial army, struck to the heart by the massacre of her women and children? Churches and hospitals, schools and factories, whole districts miles away from the front, have been pitilessly razed to the ground, and have buried under their ruins hundreds of innocent victims. The pen refuses to describe this horrible picture and the breath is taken away before a reality still more terrible and sad.

“We therefore raise our voice, before God and generations to come, to express to all the powers of the world our horror at these crimes. We are fully persuaded that all men of goodwill are on our side.”

OSSORIO Y GALLARDO, Spanish Ambassador at Paris

CLAUDIO SANCHEZ ALBORNOZ, Professor, former Minister

LEOCADIO LOBO, Vicar of the Parish of San Gines, Madrid

PROFESSOR GARCIA GALLEGO, Canon of Segovia

JOSE GALLEGOS ROCAFUL, Canon of the Cathedral of  
Granada, Professor at Madrid University

JOSE BERGAMIN, Editor of the Catholic Journal *Cruz y Raya*

JOSE MARIA SEMPRUN, Catholic writer

EUGENIO IMAZ, Secretary of the Catholic Journal *Cruz  
y Raya*

JOSE CARNER, writer

# Catholic Opinion Outside of Spain

## I. The United States

### Is Franco's Cause a "Holy War"?

*In reference to the Appeal to the World (see above, page 20), Barbara Barclay Carter writes in The Commonweal of March 5, 1937:*

"When so many pious persons give credence to those who present Franco's cause as a 'holy war,' the recent protest signed by nine eminent Spanish Catholics, against the barbarity of such war, and especially against the ruthless bombardment of Madrid is particularly opportune. Let it be clear, in view of unfounded allegations, that the signatories, who include Senor Ossorio y Gallardo, Ambassador to Belgium, are Catholics in the full sense of the word, the four priests among them—Canon Garcia Gallego, Canon Gallegos Rocaful, Canon Galligas and Father Lobo—priests continuing the full exercise of their functions. Loyalty to the Spanish government has demanded no slackening of their loyalty to the church. Nor are they alone. The fervent Catholics of the Basque provinces are members of the Popular Front, and have more than once made their voices heard, denouncing the inhumanities permitted in the name of religion which implies in its essence, respect of law, liberty and brotherly love for all men."

### "Our Fathers Loved Freedom"

*George N. Shuster, Managing Editor of The Commonweal, wrote in the April 2, 1937, number of that magazine:*

"European Catholics know and say . . . that no one can ignore what is doubtless the most poignant aspect of the whole civil war—the struggle of the Basques to escape from the clutches of the iron totalitarianism that would automatically destroy their age-old culture. The three Basque provinces are the Ireland of the

Iberias. Nowhere else in the world is Catholicism more social-minded. This region is not merely devastated by war. Its priests have been torn from their churches by insurgent troops and shot down in cemeteries and prison yards. Its schools and its places of meeting have been closed. Its visions of a measure of independence have been threatened with extinction. The emissaries it has sent to other countries have been ignored. Some of us may be pardoned for a weakness that is doubtless sentimental, atavistic—a weakness which suggests to us that if we elected to stand anywhere in this terrible struggle it would be with the people who have defended Bilbao and Irun. For somehow we cannot forget that our fathers loved freedom.”

### **Church Burning Tales Are False**

*Mr. Edmund Gilligan reported in the New York Sun, November 21, 1936:*

“It will be recalled . . . that when the Moors began their march wild stories were told of the burning of churches in Madrid by Reds. It is a strange thing to see that these churches, if they were burned, must have been rebuilt now by the hands that set the torch, because the fascist shells are falling upon them, destroying their works of art, slaughtering the children who seek refuge in them. It is wrong to say that the ancient religious spirit of Spain has given way before a materialistic ideology. That spirit will emerge triumphantly when the Moors are driven away.”

### **Who Supports the Government?**

“On the side of the legal government there are liberal and democratic republicans, the Socialists, the Syndicalists, the Anarchists, the Communists, the Catholics of the *Cruz y Raya* groups, the Basque Catholics. The vast majority are not Communists in any sense.”—*Luigi Sturzo in the Commonweal of April 16, 1937:*

### **A Catholic Journalist Speaks**

*At the American Club of Paris, Mr. Edmond L. Taylor, President of the Anglo-American Press Association and Paris Corre-*

*spondent of the Chicago Tribune, recently made a speech on the subject of his trip to Spain. Here follow some important passages from this speech, the perfect impartiality of which it is superfluous to emphasize:*

"I am not a Socialist, I am not a liberal. I do not know exactly what I am, but I do know that I am neither indignant nor surprised when I am referred to as a fascist. And it also happens that I am a Catholic, not very faithful, but Catholic just the same. There is no personal antipathy between me and the rebels.

"Nevertheless I think that the soldiers of Franco are nothing but wild beasts.

"These people act like ferocious animals and at the same time appeal to the whole world, posing as champions of western civilization. What I detest—what all journalists detest—are tendentious speeches, hypocrisy and lying propaganda.

"The Spanish fascists play but a small role in the actual battles, but they voluntarily carry on police work and executions behind the lines. At Talavera for a long time they had a woman executioner, the wife of one of their own number. She had no official position; they simply authorized her to execute prisoners as a favor to her because she liked to do it.

"The Spanish Foreign Legionnaires and the Moors are different. They are professionals. But they too have their own pet notions. I have never been able to understand why they took the trouble to tie the hands of seven republicans whom they captured near Toledo, and to tie them together with one rope before shooting them. I saw the same thing on the outskirts of Toledo—24 bodies, this time tied together with one rope. One of the bodies was headless; I suppose that a Moor did that.

"At Toledo I saw, behind the Alcazar, in a hole caused by a mine, fifty republican corpses.

"The official explanation was that these corpses, brought from the field of battle, had been placed there for sanitary reasons. I noticed that all these bodies were placed face down.

"This is difficult to explain, unless you can suggest that these were prisoners whom they made stand on the edge of the mine-hole right under the walls of the Alcazar so that the heroic defenders could enjoy the spectacle and shoot them down, in the back, peacefully, one by one.

"That shocked me still more than the terrible stories told by the Legionaires themselves about the attack on the St. John-of-Toledo Hospital to capture a handful of 'Reds' who had taken refuge there. The Legionaires killed them with bayonet and hand grenade, shooting those who tried to escape, and finished off the wounded in their beds. That is not the official version, but the Legionaires tell about it and say that they have never seen such carnage.

"I am convinced that at least a half million Spaniards have been killed up to now and that as many more will be killed before the end of the hostilities. And most of these victims have been stood up and shot against the wall. These do not only include prisoners captured at the front. At Burgos every day, and in other towns occupied by the 'Whites,' men are arrested because it has been discovered that they formerly belonged to a Leftist party and every night there are executions in the prisons. Franco cannot conquer without carrying on a terror, just as he cannot conquer without Italian and German advice and aviators, and without the Moors and Legionaires. Not because the 'Reds' have a better army—in fact they haven't anything but armed bands—but simply because the masses of the people are against Franco.

"Franco is not on the way to conquer Spain as Mussolini conquered Italy or Hitler Germany. In fact he himself is not conquering Spain. It is Hitler and Mussolini who are conquering Spain. Franco is only their general in the theater of operations."

## II. England and Ireland

### Sacrilege to Exploit Priests' Suffering

*"Penguin," a regular contributor to the British Dominican periodical Blackfriars, writes (September, 1936):*

"That a Catholic *esprit de corps* should therefore induce us to side with the insurgents and have no sympathy whatever with the 'rabble' in their resistance to what they believe (and their opponents seem to give them plenty of reason to believe) to be a threat of an oppressive, murderous and reactionary tyranny, not only does not follow, but is fundamentally unchristian. . . . And as to the religious persecution, we and our press cannot have



it both ways. Either the Spanish priests and nuns are 'martyrs' or they are not. If they are, it is sacrilege to exploit their blood and sufferings to enflame fratricide or to bait foreign intervention on behalf of the insurgents."

### **"Church Will Gain Nothing from Franco"**

*"Viator," in the Catholic Herald of London, August 21, 1936:*

"Far from developing the true spirit of Catholicism, it ought to be said that many Catholics in Spain—as elsewhere in Europe—used the church as an excuse for preserving an inadequate social order, and an intellectual indolence which left them far behind the needs of modern Spain. . . . The danger of an army [fascist] victory lies in the possibility of a military dictatorship which will re-establish the old evil system with which both church and army were bound up in the past, and do nothing to supply Spain's need, which is a constructive social order.

*"The church, it is certain, will gain nothing if it creeps back to power under General Franco's bayonets; only a thorough spiritual cleansing and revival can save Catholicism in Spain."*

### **Rebels No Patriots**

*The Reverend Father Michael O'Flanagan, one of the most beloved priests in Ireland, said at a recent meeting in Dublin:*

"The fight in Spain is a fight of the rich privileged classes against the rank and file of the poor oppressed people of Spain. The cause being fought for in Spain is nearer to us than is realized. The Foreign Legion and Moorish troops are to Spain what the Black and Tans were to Ireland. The Spaniards didn't send any people to join the Black and Tans here and they didn't make collections in their churches to help the Black and Tans in Ireland.

"The government of Spain was elected by the votes of the people, and on the other side is a body of rebels, mostly the old army. They are just the same type as our own Generals Gough and Carsons at home. The people who are calling the Spanish rebels 'patriots' have proved to be very bad judges of patriots in Ireland."



### III. France

#### Noted French Catholics Support Republic

*The attitude of many representative French Catholics was expressed in an Appeal for Peace in Spain issued early in January, 1937. Among the signers of the appeal were: Jacques Maritain, Professor of the Catholic University of Paris; Pierre Henri Simon, Professor of the Catholic University of Lille; Paul Gemahling, Professor of the University of Strasbourg; Francisque Gay, editor of the Catholic daily, L'Aube; Albert Blanchoin, Member of Parliament; Pierre Tricard-Graveron, former cabinet minister; Marc Sangnier, famous peace leader; and the Catholic writers and journalists Jeanne Ancelet-Eustache, Etienne Borne, Georges Hoog, Emmanuel Mounier, and many others. The appeal read in part as follows:*

"From various provinces of unhappy Spain, Catholic voices have reached us mourning over the agony of a nation which is the victim of the most atrocious civil war. How could we remain indifferent to these cries? Before God and history we declare our horror over the collective assassination and the atrocities without number which have been going on in Spain for more than six months.

"We protest against all those inexcusable crimes whoever may be guilty of them. We also ask: Have not those who have taken the initiative in this war—whatever may have been done later by others—a terrible responsibility for the evils and disorders which have arisen from this conflict? Everything must be done to stop this fratricidal war.

"At the moment of writing, Madrid is being systematically destroyed and its population is living under the ever-present threat of death. Help in men and in war materials from abroad, the landing of complete military units, various naval incidents—all these give the Spanish war a larger aspect. The peace of the world is in danger."

#### "There Are Not Two Spains"

*The following passages are taken from a moving speech delivered by M. Louis Martin-Chauffier, renowned French Catholic*

*writer and journalist. The lecture was given in Paris on October 30, 1936:*

"There are not two Spains. There is one Spain, with a united government and people. And then an army of chieftains for whom Spain is a prey—foreign legionaires, Moors, Germans and Italians. The foreign war, that is, the international war, will come from these foreigners, who have begun their general operation and launched their offensive. In yielding to them we increase their aggressiveness: we do not defend peace, but hasten war, by making it more efficacious against us. . . . The sole assurance of peace, the only lasting continuation of peace, we shall owe to the victory of the Spanish government forces.

"The rebellion represents nothing but the spasmodic upsurging of threatened privilege which had, moreover, lost the justification of service rendered, and the greedy appetite of foreign powers. It has not even the excuse which it offers itself, that of being a movement provoked by the assumption of power by the People's Front. Long before the elections of 1936, under a government of the Right, the plans had been drawn, the reserves accumulated, the strategic positions prepared, the connections made with Italy, Germany and Portugal. It remained only to await the favorable moment, after a calculated preparation by sabotage, calumny and acts of violence.

"It is by an atrocious abuse of the truth and an outright sacrilege that General Franco seeks to range truth on his side, involve and compromise Him with himself. Christ is neither with him nor with us, but with all, for He died for all men. He cannot be appropriated by putting a flag in one's hand, an insignia in one's button-hole, and evil sentiments in one's heart. . . . No, neither God nor religion has anything to do with this struggle, nor with those priests who go arms in hand to command rebel troops and transform their churches into forts, nor with those rich prelates who cover their earthly riches with devaluated benedictions, nor with this miscreant legionaires and Moors who 'defend' Christ by dint of pillagings and massacres.

"What we desire, since freedom is given us to be Christians, is that the many temporal bonds which subject religion to the powers of the world be eliminated. We must desire that anti-clericalism lose its justification and that the church be free, not

only free in the secular state, but liberated in its conscience. None of us feel this imperious, extreme exigency more than our Spanish Catholic brothers who are fighting for the republic. They are perhaps nearer than we to that costly liberation. But, if I send them my fraternal greetings, I cannot make a distinction between them and their comrades in suffering, comrades in arms and in hope. In these days, the future of Spain is being decided—the liberty and the peace of the world. I ask you, my friends, with me, to say to all those Spanish republicans, from the Catholics to the Communists, that our hope is in them and that our hearts are no longer here, but at Madrid, where we shall conquer by their victory or perish by their defeat.”

## IV. Other European Countries

### “Madrid Morale Is Magnificent”

*Xavier Pruszyński is a fervent Catholic and a regular contributor to the conservative Polish paper Czas. At the outbreak of the revolt he came to Spain to get first-hand information of the events there taking place. When interviewed by an American newspaper correspondent, he had the following to say concerning the bombardment of Madrid:*

“The behavior of this town, under uninterrupted bombardment, is beyond anything one could have imagined. . . . The morale of the Madrilenos in the face of the enemy attempting to cause a panic in a vast city full of women and children who bore with stoicism all the horrors of war was magnificent. The effort to strike panic in their hearts will fail. I think that even their most fanatical enemies cannot but admire the people of Madrid.

“It is contradictory to speak of humanitarianism in war. But there is no justification for what is happening here now. I am not a strategist and I may be mistaken as to what measures may be ‘unfortunately indispensable in time of war,’ but I do not hesitate to state that the twelve shells fired by the fascists as the clock struck the last twelve strokes of 1936, at a point where Madrilenos are in the habit of celebrating the birth of the new year, did not correspond to any military necessity.

"For an explanation of such deed one must look into the realms of pathology. . . . The World War may have been more bloody and destructive, but it did not present such a macabre aspect as does this civil war. There is no justification for the atrocious deeds of the fascists, either in the necessities of war or the activities of the inhabitants of Madrid. Those twelve shells, fired as 1937 began, destroy the claims of the rebels that they are the 'defenders of civilization' and the accusations which they bring against the 'Reds' of 'lack of humanity.' "

### **"History Does Not Record Such Barbarism"**

*Dr. J. Brouwer is a noted Dutch Catholic and an authority of long standing on Spanish affairs. The following quotations are taken from a series of articles which appeared in the great Dutch magazine Nieuw Rotterdamsche Courant:*

"Everything that can be said of the extreme cruelty and bloody barbarism which the rebels practise is small compared with the real truth. In the first two weeks of the rebellious movement, in Valladolid alone, there were recorded three thousand executions, and in Zaragoza more than four thousand. In Burgos the executions continue, with the most cruel methods, of those affiliated with party organizations and workmen's clubs and members of the republican parties. In all these cities men have been burned at the stake with a pyre of so-called heretical books, taken from the archives and the libraries.

"All that has been said of the slaughters in Badajoz is small compared with the reality there recorded. A large crowd of laborers and poor folks took refuge in the cathedral, believing that the right of asylum of the church would protect them from the rebels. . . . They were taken out from the sacred place and executed. Never before have such acts of barbarism been committed. From the cathedral square they were taken to the bull-ring wherein the terrible massacre took place which has amazed world opinion. Anything that may be said regarding the crimes perpetrated in Badajoz once this region fell into the rebel hands, as monstrous as it may seem, is far from the truth, for the reality is much more tragic. It has never been witnessed before; history does not record such precedents in the most barbaric peoples.

It is true that from Badajoz and from Portugal the German and Italian airplanes departed to bombard the zones of loyalist territory. I have seen it and I, who have denounced it to the world, once more do here denounce it, under my word of honor. I am a Catholic and cannot lie nor have I ever lied. I have not taken sides in this struggle. I am dedicated to scientific activities and I know my duty to truth."



# *In the Name of Humanity*

## PLEASE HELP SAVE THE CHILD VICTIMS OF FASCISM

José Antonio de Aguirre, Catholic President of the heroic Basque people, as they defend their liberty against the fascist invaders, says: "Save our women and children—for our men we ask nothing."

A Basque, mother of three, has written: "Despite our own hunger we do not appeal for ourselves, we appeal to you for our loved ones, our children. Driven from town to town, they are footsore and weary. Unfed, easy victims of disease, they are literally dying on our hands. Humanitarian Americans! You cannot refuse us in our hour of great need. For us nothing—but for our children milk and food! Don't let our babies die!"

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- \$225 will feed, clothe and care for 10 children for 2 months.
- \$150 will feed, clothe and care for 10 children for 1 month.
- \$100 will feed, clothe and care for 10 children for 2 weeks.
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25 pounds of sugar .....	1.00
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